

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended): A steering system for supporting a steering shaft to which a steering wheel attaches so as to be adjustable of axial displacement of the steering shaft, the steering system comprising:

an inner column for rotatably supporting the steering shaft;

an outer jacket adapted to take, when the outer jacket is pressed from both sides of a first in a facing direction, either a first state in which an outer circumferential surface of the inner column is held in such a manner as to disable the adjustment of the axial displacement; or a second state in which the outer circumferential surface of the inner column is held in such a manner as to enable the adjustment of the axial displacement;

a bracket portion for fixing the outer jacket to a vehicle body; and

a fixing member for connecting the outer jacket with the bracket portion,

wherein when the outer jacket is shifted from the second state to the first state, the inner column receives pressures applied thereto by the outer jacket in a plurality of directions which are other than the first direction, ~~different from at least the facing direction.~~

2. (original): A steering system for supporting a steering shaft to which a steering wheel attaches so as to be adjustable of an axial displacement of the steering wheel, the steering system comprising:

an inner column for rotatably supporting the steering shaft;

a pair of bracket portions mounted on a vehicle body and disposed at positions which face each other with respect to an axis of the steering shaft;

a tension member provided in such a manner as to extend between the pair of bracket portions;

two fixing members for fixing the tension member relative to the pair of bracket portions;

an application member provided between the tension member and the fixing members and the application member applying a relative displacement between the bracket portions and the fixing members in accordance with an operation of a manipulation lever; and

an outer jacket held to the vehicle body through the connection of the tension member, the bracket portions and the fixing members, the outer jacket having:

a pressurizing portion where an outer circumference of the outer jacket contacts with both of the pair of bracket portions at positions located at least between the pair of bracket portions by virtue of relative displacement of the pair of bracket portions; and

an inner circumferential surface which encloses and supports an outer circumference of the inner column,

wherein the inner column receives pressurizing forces applied thereto by the bracket portions and the fixing members in a plurality of directions which are different from a relative displacement direction of the outer jacket.

3. (currently amended): The steering system as set forth in Claim 2, wherein when the pair of bracket portions approach each other, the outer jacket is brought into contact with the inner column on both circumferential sides thereof in such a manner that the both circumferential

side holds therebetween a position on which the inner column intersects with a direction in which the bracket portions and the fixing members are displaced relatively.

4. (original): The steering system as set forth in Claim 3, wherein a recess is formed on at least either of the inner circumferential surface of the outer jacket and an outer circumferential surface of the inner column, and

wherein a horizontal line which intersects with the axis of the inner column passes through the recess so formed.

5. (original): The steering system as set forth in Claim 2, wherein the outer jacket deflects in such a manner that

a location thereof which is circumferentially farther apart from a position, which intersects with a direction in which the bracket portions and the fixing members are displaced relatively, is displaced more largely than a location thereof which is circumferentially closer to the position, when the outer jacket contacts the inner column as the pair of bracket portions approach each other.

6. (original): A steering system as set forth in Claim 5, wherein the pressurizing portion of the outer jacket, with which at least one of the bracket portions is brought into abutment, includes a flange portion extending radially from the outer jacket, and

wherein a recess is formed on an outer circumference of the flange portion at a position where a horizontal line which intersects with the axis of the inner column passes.